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ABSTRACT

Inaugural addresses of all state university presidents before 1860 were reviewed for major themes regarding the evolution of the state university idea. Five indicators of gradual change toward a distinctive state university concept are discussed: the reflection of self-conscious nationalism in new educational institutions to match the new republic; the emphasis on character building, morality, and discipline in student relationship; educational concern for, if not involvement in, the "big issues" of society; the secularization of the state university, with the emergence of strong, progressive devotion to science; and the changing relation between higher education and church and state. The concept of the state university was a process that evolved from the historical period between the colonial colleges and the passing of the Land Grant College Act of 1862. Although there were false starts and confusion between "private" and "public," or church and state support, it should be noted that almost two-thirds of the states had already established universities prior to 1860. Collectively, these inaugural addresses of the state university presidents present ideas that were destined to become characteristic of the state universities. (Contains 53 references.) (SW)

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Evolution of the State University Idea:

Presidential Inaugural Addresses Before 1860

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Eldon L. Johnson

TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)

ABSTRACT

Evidence is presented to show that the historical period between the colonial colleges and the so-called "state university movement" after the Land Grant College Act of 1862 was not as comatose or retrograde as commonly assumed. If there was a false start toward the state university idea, then a pullback in the confusion between "private" and "public", or church and state support, there was also the founding of state universities in almost two-thirds of the states existing before 1860. That these new institutions, both in philosophy and policy, made significant contributions to the evolution of the state university idea is confirmed in the inaugural addresses of the presidents of these antebellum institutions. The collection and examination of all such addresses now preserved yield two dividends: intellectual contributions worth knowing on their own merits because never before published and their relation to five indicators of gradual change toward a distinctive state university idea.

Evolution of the State University Idea:

Presidential Inaugural Addresses Before 1860

The period between the colonial colleges and the so-called state university movement needs more light because it has been portrayed as a comatose or even retrograde period inimical to the development of public higher education.[1] As commonly stated, it is true that making the public break from the old college had suffered rebuffs. These included the revolt against the intellectual inheritance of the Enlightenment and the French *philosophes*, the failure of efforts to bring six of the nine colonial colleges under state control, the public indifference or resistance to the separation of church and state, the rising dominance of institution building to serve the needs of religious denominations, and the significance of the fact that Virginia was the only former colonial state to create a public university where a college already existed.[2] The Dartmouth College case was a rebuff also, but the effect on the public university movement has been overstated.[3]

The impression is left that some kind of a later movement--new, original, essentially rootless--suddenly sprang into being only after the pangs of Civil War. This neglects and leaves in doubt what influence, if any and how much, was exerted by the twenty-three universities which were established during this time, professing to be distinct in control, finance, and public accountability in general. These include the twenty-one mentioned in D.G. Tewksbury, *The Founding of American Colleges and Universities Before the Civil War*, plus two others: Pennsylvania State University and Michigan State University, both of which claim 1855 as their founding date.

It could hardly have been otherwise than that these institutions and their claims were part of the labored and confusing evolution which eventually led to the public-private distinction made complete, according to John S. Whitehead,[4] only in the 1870s, and to the

explosive public development under the Land Grant College Act of 1862. Even the false starts are not without significance. Therefore, it should be illuminating to explore the dominant and distinguishing ideas represented by these new universities. One revealing way, never before attempted, would be to collect and examine the inaugural addresses of the state university presidents before 1860--the chief articulators of what their institutions professed, planned, and performed. Such an examination of original sources would serve two purposes. The addresses would reveal the educational ideals and institutional intentions of their historical period, worth examination on their own merits, and also their relation to the longer evolutionary change in higher education. What the presidents said took on added importance because, beyond their official institutional capacities, they were among the intellectual elite, both in shaping and diffusing ideas of current concern.

Most of the inaugural occasions were great public events of special importance. They gave the incoming president a natural forum for making pronouncements on the state of his university--its central mission, its conformity with or departure from the educational norm of the time, its relations with all constituencies (from students and parents to community and state), and its plans great and small for the future. Tuscaloosa's *Spirit of the Age* reported that Alva Woods's inauguration of 1831 "was large, respectable and imposing," with attendance by clergy, trustees, the acting governor, and "other citizens of the state".[5] At the University of Missouri in 1850, the inaugural combination with degree conferral inspired the *Columbia Statesman* to report that the "assembly...was immense," with many "strangers who honored the day" and with a program so protracted that it even precluded reportorial comment on the centerpiece--the address itself.[6]

To check on their contributions, all extant inaugural addresses of all the state university presidents before 1860 were assembled from the various university archives and

then analyzed for major themes or other light on the evolution of the distinguishing ideas that were to characterize the state university. As expected, several archives responded that inaugural addresses were either not given or not preserved; and at the extreme, the University of Virginia, following the convictions of its founder, Thomas Jefferson, did not have a "president" until after 1900. The search finally yielded eighteen addresses--a modest number but still significant because it represents 100 percent of the targeted institutions rather than a sample. The analysis does not pretend to address all factors in the full sweep of the evolution of the state university idea but, rather, it is a limited approach, targeted and manageable, to determine what the presidents said and how their ideas reflected or contributed to the evolutionary process. If the period is a bit of a mystery, this approach should give some clues for better understanding.

Examination of the addresses has yielded findings which can best be presented in relation to five intellectual streams, clear at the center but overlapping at the edges: (1) the reflection of self-conscious nationalism in new educational institutions to match the new republic, (2) the emphasis on character building, morality, and discipline in student relationships, (3) educational concern for, if not involvement in, the "big issues" out in society, (4) the secularization of the state university with the emergence of strong, progressive devotion to science, and (5) the changing relation between higher education and church and state.

The overwhelming initial impression gained from the addresses is the preoccupation with religion-based, value-laden Christian education. If not up front, it was always asserted at the end, simply assumed and understood as undergirding everything important either in a university or an inaugural address. That stance seemed natural for the ordained ministers who dominated the presidency even in these public institutions, but it was also unmistakably

the "spirit of the age." The contrast to education nowadays could hardly have been greater--ethical considerations and inculcation of values were at the center, piety was paramount, and professors were to personify, to practice, and to be judged by what they taught. Caution is necessary, therefore, not to labor this aspect unduly because it portrays what was common rather than distinguishing in the branching out of public and private higher education from a single trunk. This is the trunk, as no end of quotations, here deliberately omitted, could be paraded to substantiate. Rather, it is the departure from this early characteristic--the move to secularization and science--that is important, as will later be discussed among the significant intellectual streams.

Self-Conscious Nationalism

In an age prizing oratory, the addresses were laced with high-flown purple passages about the new American republic--its unique character in contrast to tyranny in Europe and elsewhere, its manifest destiny to span and develop the continent, and its need for preservation and vigor through educational institutions committed to citizen enlightenment and the inculcation of patriotism. The new republic was a model for the world; therefore, the university had a mission to serve and preserve that model directly by educating its citizens and public officers, and indirectly by nurturing its institutions through the dissemination of knowledge, both known and newly discovered.[7] It was what President Anderson of Miami University (Ohio) in 1849 called the "American mission," peculiarly American as "something special." There was uncharacteristic agreement on "the fundamental principle" of the nation's foundation, unlike the appalling differences in Europe.[8] Still earlier, 1834, another Miami president had spoken of the American commitment to equality which gave the nation's youth "inducements to aspire to intellectual and moral improvement" unlike youth anywhere else.[9] President Woods of the University of Alabama in 1831 lauded the

contemporary Greek aspirations for democracy (with the establishment of seminaries of learning), in contrast to the cruelty of Turkey, as evidence that ignorance means despotism, while knowledge means liberty and prosperity.[10]

The incontestable superiority of America, as seen then, seems narrow, if not bigoted today. It was postulated in bigness, in race, in religion, and in opportunity as well as obligation. In 1850, President Shannon of the University of Missouri boasted of the thirty states with a sevenfold increase in population (then standing at 21,000,000) as "carrying on its heaving bosom Anglo-Saxon arts, enterprise, and civilization." This superiority extended particularly over Europe and its Catholic parts--Italy, Spain, and France.[11] When he was inaugurated at the University of Wisconsin in the same year, President Lathrop was equally partial to the "treasured results" of the Anglo-Saxon race and its peculiar promise for the future.[12] Unanimously it was a Christian nation, and no president would disagree with President Junkin of Miami in 1841, when he called the United States "the strongest Protestant nation in the world," and his successor who eight years later dared to warn against experience under "the Romish church," since it was regarded as "un-republican, un-American, if not un-christian(sic)."[13] President Shannon unabashedly laid on the redemptive summation: "The hopes of down-trodden and degraded humanity, under God, centre in us...Heaven has, no doubt, raised up this American Israel for sublime purposes of good to the human race." Not surprisingly, he saw "a glorious day...about to dawn" with the promise of "the regeneration of the world" yet within the century.[14]

Nor were the obvious limitations of the new nation anything to be modest about. On the contrary, attention was repeatedly called to the proximity of the frontier, either in time or distance, and one president admitted that Oxford and Cambridge might see his listeners as "barbarians." No matter, in time as short as that since literally dwelling in the wilderness, "a

mighty nation" would emerge, in "possession of a continent" extending to the Pacific Ocean, inhabited by citizens more fortunate than any people preceding.[15] This nationalism welled up from, and seeped down to, local boosterism also--the beauty and illimitable promise of "our valley", "our state", "this growing empire of ours." The new nation needed public institutions of higher education exactly as it needed public common schools, said President Smith of the University of Vermont in 1849, and it needed them state-based in keeping with the decentralized federal system and the expectation of tax support.[16]

Some lessening of this strident nationalism was apparent by 1860, when President Lathrop at Indiana University alluded to it as almost an afterthought and President Minor of the University of Missouri gave reminders of manifest destiny and the global model, but did so in muted strains. What did endure, however, was the conviction that the new nation's preservation and success depended on popular education, a schooled citizenry, and higher institutions open to students and catering to professions heretofore neglected.

Early in the period under consideration, one president said it for all his colleagues: "I am a believer in the omnipotence of education."[17] Late in the period, another president struck the dominant chord, under the title, "On the Connection between Collegiate Education and the Welfare of the Commonwealth." He expatiated on the preservation of free institutions through the direct education of the fortunate few in each generation and the indirect influence of knowledge diffusion "throughout the land" with the perpetuation of art, the advancement of science, and the development of vast natural resources.[18] Also, Wisconsin listeners heard the new president fix the university at the apex of the public school system, including teacher training, as the chosen means of intergenerational education--thus doing "the proper business of the civil State, and its bounden duty" to educate every child and to give the university sufficient "endowments...to open its doors to every son of the

Republic."[19] This democratization of education would come at a price: virtually all of the inaugural addresses included a plea--long commonly unheeded--for corresponding financial support from the public beneficiaries.

Mental and Physical Discipline

The kind of education thus eulogized placed heavy emphasis on mental and moral discipline. It fit neatly into the prevailing psychological belief that all individuals have certain "faculties" in need of training, thus predictably leading to the designation of the moral faculties as the "noblest form".[20] This consuming need of the mind for training and discipline could best be met by a Christian education and the classical curriculum. The latter, with its ancient languages, was vigorously defended, decade after decade, for its assurance of mental discipline and furnishing of the mind, thus making a convenient and mutually reinforcing alliance between religious and classical education. This linkage was prominent and adroitly managed in the earliest of the inaugural addresses available, that of President Wilson of Ohio University in 1824, which was uncharacteristic in the absence of "preaching" but still conventional in its ardent devotion to liberal education.[21] While different in emphasis, this agreed with a later colleague's belief that both elements could and should proceed "by development from within"--"the outbringing of that in a man, which is innate and connatural to him--the unfolding, strengthening, and perfecting of the faculties and principles of his nature."[22]

This "perfecting...his nature" was graphically reflected in student relationships. Even with some historical familiarity with the rough-hewn antebellum college with its rambunctious students admitted and taught at levels ill-fitting "higher" education, the present-day reader of the inaugural addresses is shocked by the attitude toward the youth who were so sedulously recruited in the name of democratized education. They were seen as ever-present threats to

institutional calm and desperately in need of moral regeneration. "Discipline" was the favored word and it took the form of meticulous codes of conduct, imposition of the Bible and the chapel, endless admonitions to righteousness and rectitude, and penalties for the heedless. Student life could also be likened to that of soldiers in the barracks.

The overwhelming assumption was made that students were peculiarly in need of moral guidance, that they were the natural enemy of the president and faculty, that campus life had to exemplify and uphold the university's moral mission, and that parent-like surveillance and corrective punishments should be the guarantors of student uprightness. The student-directed admonitions candidly expected drunkenness, gambling, card-playing, cheating, lying, fornication, theft, idleness, "riotous excesses," "nocturnal revelry," and worse. The presidential phrases leave no doubt about the atmosphere: "purity of morals", "to serve and worship the God of the Bible," to respect authority and "learn docility," "this conspiracy against the captain...this code of dishonor," the need for "gentlemanly bearing" and "law of honor," "protection from the thralldom of the senses," "liberty is right action," "the pruning knife is as necessary as the spade", "with the fear of God...never...the least trouble," and (summarizing everybody's last best hope for salvation over sin) "if anything can save the young, it is a thorough moral, intellectual, and religious education."

The point to note here is that this was the practical application of the perceived mission of the institution--how what was taught by the professors was to be practiced by the students; how pietism was all-encompassing, linking behavior and instruction together; and how the "will of God" and its revealed values were the underpinnings and guides of all education, both in and out of the classroom. This grim view had a silver lining, or so it was thought, because successfully combating ignorance (thus revealing truth and morality) would

most assuredly bring remedy to a whole spectrum of human ills, from student misconduct, through crime, to national tyranny.

The student guardians or surrogate parents (not only professors but also presidents, who were regarded as the disciplinarians-in-chief) had to conform to the same moral standards as their wards, with personal character considered "a matter of vast importance."[23] Such conformity was the appropriate business of the university trustees, with no possible thought of the modern defense of "privacy" or "relevance" or "academic freedom." Regents, professors, and the public in Wisconsin in 1860 heard that the professor's "life should be regulated by the Christian faith, should drink deep of the Christian spirit, and be animated by Christian hope."[24] This was within the context of saying the faculty should be chosen by merit alone, perhaps revealing what a modern critic might call "situational merit," or merit within understood limits.

In other words, there was nothing subtle about what the university was determined to grind into the education of the students, both inside and outside the classroom. Rhetoric touted it, the atmosphere reeked of it, and practice left no doubt. No analysis of the inaugurals could omit this recognition of the presidential preoccupation with student behavior, along with, if not sometimes rather than, student learning; but it seems more an evidence of what was common rather than different between the old college and what professed to be public.

The External World And Great Issues

What did the inaugural addresses reveal about the university's relation to and involvement in the external world--the community, state, and nation? That relationship and involvement seemed implied in being "public," in differing from the church-related institutions, in expecting support by taxation, and, in fact, in simply bearing the name (in most cases) of

a state to which peculiarly beholden. On balance, despite rhetoric about the continental empire, the great nation, and the role of education as the guarantor of liberty, there seemed to be little interest in external affairs of the time and an appalling indifference to the great issues later defined by history.

One address specifically aimed at the relation of collegiate education to the welfare of the commonwealth genuflected before the "well-being of society", the security assured in an educated public opinion, the needed capacity to develop natural resources through science, and "the sound solution of many of the social and ethical problems that are now agitating our people." But there was not a single specific--this in 1855.[25] In fact, the actual concerns, when expressed, seemed safely remote, like the immorality of Byron as a genius gone wrong, the despotism of Europe, and the limitations of Jefferson as an educational leader (as seen in Ohio).

But what about slavery? Was that a concern for such professed moralists and guardians of liberty? Virtually nothing was said about it except in the most indirect and inferential, if not deliberately ambiguous, way. Whatever intended, one relevant lament over the "coming malignity of party spirit" gave no hint that either cause or remedy lay in differences over slavery. In discussing the future of the Constitution, it was said that students "will learn to detest and abhor the brawling, senseless, heartless, one-sided demagogues of the south and north, who are vainly plotting its overthrow."[26] Meaning what? Such balanced blameworthiness was less surprising in the border state of Missouri, where President Minor in 1860 defended the right to march under the banner with "In the South and for the South" on one side, while "we are not only willing but desirous to see perpetually emblazoned on the other, 'In the Union and for the Union'"[27] His predecessor of a decade had waxed eloquent over the "destiny truly sublime" when citizens had attained intellectual

and moral culture--"sublime in the overthrow of despotism." We know, however, that this ambiguity had nothing to do with slavery because its author was lecturing about the state on the Biblical justification of slavery. He gave higher priority to two other lamentations: the Mexican War and "the blighting influence of the present gold fever, sweeping like a malignant pestilence through the land."[28]

The flamboyant Junkin of Miami got it partly right in 1841. He delved into Biblical prophecy and foretold that "in about a quarter of a century" a battle would be fought to end the despotism tyrannizing Christendom, with Miami's sons "drawn into the whirlpool"--in a "universal war for liberty...whether man shall be bond or free." But it seemed to be an apocalyptic Armageddon between the forces of good and evil, with the final triumph of "that great day of God Almighty" confirmed "in the blood of slaughtered millions."[29] Neither in the context nor in the speaker's explanatory notes later appended is there any evidence that "liberty" or "bond or free" had anything to do with slavery. Four years later, Junkin's successor, President MacMaster, did become unique among the presidents in courageously singling out slavery as a major issue--whether personal or national, religious or political. He said religion condemned the moral degradation of human beings to chattels and "no sophistry can persuade the moral sense of a Christian people to believe (it) to be right." He did, however, counsel "the patience, and prudence required in its extirpation."[30]

Here the logical assumption breaks down: the idea that presidents would be intellectual leaders on the large social issues of the time, including slavery. The presidents studied here are a clear exception to historian George P. Schmidt's findings that presidents in general were "effusive" commentators despite their reflection of "the prevailing opinion of their section, class, or church," with variation from advocacy of abolition to slavery-with-kindness.[31] They are also an exception to Wilson Smith's conclusions from his study of the

civic activities of forty-eight antebellum philosophers (including thirty-eight college or university presidents), two-thirds of whom had made their ideas on slavery known by the late 1850s, although sometimes admittedly "oblique" or disguised as natural rights.[32] The disparity between original assumption and reality suggests an alternative explanation: that the public sensitivity and presidential hazard were greater for the public university presidents than for the church-related ones (i.e., presidents in general); hence the surprising caution.

It would seem from all this that the antebellum state universities, despite indirect contributions from their secularization and rising reliance on scientific investigation, were still operating in the ivory-tower, teaching-only mode, with confused signals for the later emergence of the distinguishing idea of practical relevance, public service, and the application of knowledge to the solution of society's problems.

Secularization

The most distinct intellectual contribution to the state university ideas in this period was the movement from religion-centered education to an education revolutionized by the scientific spirit. The preponderant old convictions in the presidential inaugurals became, not an augury of the future, but a point of departure. During this time of seeming religiosity, sincerely held, the need for reconciling religion and science became increasingly apparent; and by the end of the period, science began to emerge from a secondary and derivative status. Handing down a fixed or revealed corpus of knowledge could be seen as yielding to what was open to change and growth by investigation, practice, observation, and verification. While the beginning of the trend was obvious, the break with the past was still only partial. It was part of what has been called the oldest and longest major theme in American higher education: "the drift toward secularism" in response "to the climate of the society it serves."[33]

As early as 1837, the incoming president of the University of Alabama, Basil Manly, undertook the difficult reconciliation. While he emphasized science and the laws of nature, he still kept the emphasis on religion as an all-encompassing restraint. He said "observing and accommodating ourselves to the laws of nature" yields "the sum of human wisdom and power," but his major theme was still tied to the minor theme that science and religion are "an inseparable alliance" and "a mutual dependence." While he tried to elevate science as "the meliorating influence...upon the mortal interests of man," he finally put it down as the handmaid and child of piety.[34] The liberalizing influence of science could be no longer ignored but safety and conformity were often found in obfuscating meanings by calling religion "the science of science" and "the great terminating science."[35] By the end of the 1850s, the shift was apparent. While conceding the scriptures as the final test, President Minor of Missouri in 1860 found a place for "natural religion" derived from the revealed, which could be modified by reasoning or "a sufficient weight of testimony," thus encouraging the practice of "the greatest boldness of research and freedom of inquiry."[36]

The devotion to science and practice shone brightest in the institutions which began with an emphasis on agricultural and mechanical education: those destined to become Michigan State University and Pennsylvania State University. Significance lies in the fact that these institutions were founded near the end of the antebellum period, reflecting the culminating progress of the state universities and the state legislatures away from the earlier norm to changing content and an expanded student clientele. President Evan Pugh, combining his inaugural address with the second commencement at the four-year Farmers High School, as named in 1860, said, "We owe it to the cause of agricultural practice...that the light of science be set up to guide it in the onward march of modern improvement." To the old plan of mental discipline was to be added "a vast deal of practical knowledge."[37]

Three years earlier, citizens in Michigan were hearing an address which came no closer to religion than "natural laws," emphasized science wholly, and advocated an education of utility and open access rather than privilege. This was from Joseph R. Williams as he was installed as the first president of the Michigan State Agricultural College (later to become Michigan State University). The targeted mission of his institution inspired part of what he said, but the institutional embodiment of that mission by the state legislature itself represented a new era--a recognition of education for neglected professions and neglected students, with scientific and practical emphasis rather than classical or religious. It was not a complete substitute for the old, but a needed supplement, which was destined to affect the old at the same time.

Instead of talking about piety and patriotism, Williams addressed three new needs in higher education: a much greater role for science, a more inclusive and less privileged conception of the professions, and far more democratization and open student access. While agriculture was his focus, his liberalizing and secularizing proposals had much broader implications. If higher education was to be liberalized, doubters would regard extending it to farmers as surely the least needed; so he taunted his adversaries with repeated theoretical questions about whether the hoe and plow would always be the ultimate technology and whether Ireland had anything to learn about potato disease, Egypt about locusts, and hog farmers about cholera. Instead of appealing to the supernatural, he rested his case on "those natural sciences and practical arts which conspire to aid men in the cultivation of the soil." In consequence, he was also making the case for extending educational opportunity to the seven-eights "of the race" who were seen as "unworthy of mental cultivation," a limitation he likened to nurturing the parasite while neglecting the parent tree.[38]

He itemized instructional needs embodying the changes--laboratories, specimens, an implements museum, an agricultural library, apparatus, and land for practice and experiment. He even seemed to anticipate the ideas of modern extensionists and conservationists. His plan would provide: "a far wider dissemination of vital agricultural knowledge...(so) a farmer will learn to observe, learn to think, learn to learn" and also inculcate the idea that "a farmer should perpetually bear in mind that one generation of men hold the earth in trust for the next."[30]

This watershed message was a fitting close to the period--a link between the older public universities, still religion-oriented and classics-oriented, and those which either sprang from or were greatly influenced by the Land Grant College Act of 1862. These ideas about the centrality of science and the practical applications of its derived technologies were soon to be incorporated into that act, which gave profound impetus to the growth of public universities.

Relation to Church and State

The best illustration of this struggle between what was passing and what was emerging--between status quo and change--is shown in ideas expressed about the relation between higher education and church and state. It was one thing to hold that the new republic (peculiarly designed to reflect the public interest wherein state and church were separated) called for new educational institutions reflecting similar design; but it was quite another thing to create such institutions when religion so suffused everything called "education" and when the state was so tardy in giving the financial support needed for institutional autonomy.

No matter that they were the heads of the new kind of public educational institutions, the earliest presidents knew no kind of curriculum except the classical, not much changed

from medieval times. It could not be distinguished from the Yale model in the famous 1828 report. President Pease of the University of Vermont still contended in 1856 that "nothing better has yet been found than the old curriculum of the CLASSICS." Indeed, "the most complete idea possible of education" would be the combination of the components of Plato's plan of education for his state guardians, provided it was infused with "an atmosphere of right religious influence"--Plato Christianized.[40] Furthermore, the presidents and faculty had themselves been trained in that curriculum and been recruited in most cases from clerical careers, which were often still pursued parallel to the academic. In his study of *The Old Time College President*, George P. Schmidt found that 262 of the 288 pre-Civil War college presidents were ordained ministers.[41] The ratio in the new-type public institution could not have been much different. From its foundation down to the twentieth century, every president of the University of Georgia, save one, "was an ordained minister, and some preached about as much as they taught."[42] Despite this grip from the church, there was also a pull from the state. Caught with feet in both camps, church and state, public presidents had need for some astute reconciliation. Most of them found a place in their inaugural messages to explain how religion could still be honored and taught under public auspices, which were often called "Godless." The answer was the avoidance of sectarianism--religion, yes, but not a particular sectarian kind. In fact, the very existence of so many denominations called for tolerance and objectivity in the college. One president made the case for a religious nation but never a national religion.[43] In the decade 1850-60, President Lathrop moved courageously to the advocacy of education as a "distinct and independent profession," where there would be neither religious nor political test for faculty or president.[44] Instead, the expectation would be that "in his high vocation, he is too profoundly Christian to be sectarian--that he is too intensely American, to be partizan (sic)."[45]

This evolution of what would now be called the "institutional mission" of the antebellum public university was accompanied by parallel development toward public control and public support, first in ideas and intentions and then grudgingly in actual practice. It took decades, but gradually the "public" or "state" idea pushed out the self-perpetuating boards of trustees and gained popular acceptance of financial support as a public obligation (i.e. eventually through annual appropriations from tax revenue.) The presidential frustration with the public's tardiness in discharging the obligation implicit in creating distinctively "public" institutions was shown in both suave entreaties and bitter satire. The inaugural messages reminded the public of their "sacred duty," the need for "fostering care...and for general patronage and support," and the desirability of "complete endowment," meaning not sporadic lump sums but, rather, "let it be yearly."[46] With biting satire, one president castigated those who hesitated to tax for constructive educational institutions while cheerfully "supporting destructive agencies" like the military, when his institution was asking for what "would not amount to six kernels of corn per day."[47] Another, mindful of the great legislative interest in fostering both local and national development through building canals, roads, railroads, and even prisons, said, "a good college of high order is the noblest sort of internal improvement" but it "cannot be built up like a railroad..."[48] The public required many more such reminders before the full "public" concept became a reality.

Contributions from Antebellum State Universities

The insufficiently explored question is what philosophical and intellectual contributions were made to the state university idea by the first state universities--the twenty-three here examined--that preceded the Land Grant College Act. The antebellum time was obviously a period of changing ideas about higher education--in kinds of institutions, what should be taught, and relations with church and state. This time of the great proliferation of

denominational colleges as the dominant type of institution also saw the beginnings of an alternative type--naturally smaller in number--more aligned with the state than the church.

As seen above, the inaugural addresses of the presidents of these earliest state universities give some clues as to what was happening, and what was changing, in these embryonic years. These inside academic practitioners echoed and further advanced what outside public men like Thomas Jefferson had already done in Virginia, William Davie in North Carolina, and Abraham Baldwin in Georgia; and what Governor William Plumer had attempted in New Hampshire.[49]

Looking at the addresses collectively, it is clear that they promoted ideas destined to become characteristic of the state universities, making them increasingly distinguishable from the much more numerous colleges dependent on church, benevolence, and private control. By their addition both to educational philosophy and policy, these ideas took their place with others in contributing to incremental educational changes from religious preoccupation to secular emphasis; from the fixed corpus of classical knowledge to the addition of the utilitarian and scientific; from student relations preponderantly fixed on character to emphasis on learning; from catering to the privileged students and professions to democratization and curriculum expansion; from confused relations with both church and state support to unambiguous separation from the church, with state control and state support; and from a sense of institutional detachment to increasing identification with, and service to, the larger community, particularly the state for which usually named. Admittedly, this was an evolutionary process--the seeds and roots that had their full flowering only decades later.

The point too often neglected is that the six or seven decades before the Civil War were important and contributory, rather than insignificant and negligible, in the evolution of

the state university idea. Surely more than passing importance lies in the fact that almost two-thirds of the then existing states had established universities in this period. What happened after the Civil War was not without its heritage of ideas and actions as confirmed by the inaugural addresses antedating the Act of 1862; and it is a gross error to attribute the explosive postwar growth of state colleges and universities to some spontaneous, Minerva-like birth. How wrong was Senator Justin Morrill when he in his declining years looked back on his legislative creation and could recall little help or inspiration from sources other than his own. Even the land-grant stimulus was both well established and well used under provisions of acts of admission for all the twenty-one states added to the union before the Civil War except four (Vermont, Kentucky, Maine, and Texas).[50]

Nor should it be assumed that the "public" ideas all had pristine succession from strictly public sources. Many of the seminal notions "had their day" and were bruited about in the private sector and even put to experiment if not ongoing practice in private or church-related institutions. Many changes were shared, with the difference only in degree and with sufficient ambiguity to produce what has been called "the false dawn of the state university."[51] Frances Wayland, President of Brown University, in his 1850 report anticipated the essentials of the emerging state university.[52] Also, some private institutions anticipated the land-grant colleges by experimenting with student manual labor and professorships of something-or-other essentially synonymous with agriculture. And, even as to presidential inaugural addresses, what is reported here would be hard to distinguish from the spirit, tone, and content of what Horace Mann said in his extremely protracted inaugural as first president of the independent, non-sectarian Antioch College, founded in 1852.[53] In all institutions, both public and private, both history and future of higher education were intermixed.

Nevertheless, the passage of time and the play of institutional self-interest sorted out the ideas that were to characterize the different types of institutions. The streams of thought increasingly directed into the state university channel were taking shape and finding expression in the presidential inaugural addresses. By the time of the Civil War, the divergence from the educational norms of the past gave both physical and philosophical evidence that the concept of the state university was an idea whose time had come. Nationwide coverage in some form was then inevitable.

NOTES

(Unless otherwise specified, inaugural addresses are in the archives of the institution named and the Walter Havinghurst Special Collections at Miami University of Ohio). The page numbers sometimes come from published collections of which the addresses are a part.)

1. D. G. Tewksbury, *The Founding of American Colleges and Universities before the Civil War* (New York: Teachers College, Columbia University, 1932), 136; L. R. Veysey, *The Emergence of the American University* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1965), 1; T. R. Crane, (ed.), *The Colleges and the Public*, 1787-1862 (New York: Teachers College, Columbia University, 1963), v-vi.
2. Tewkesbury, *The Founding of American Colleges*, 142-166.
3. E. L. Johnson, *The Dartmouth College Case: The Neglected Educational Meaning, Journal of the Early Republic* 3 (Spring 1983), 45-67.
4. John S. Whitehead, *The Separation of College and State* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1973), 31.
5. Alva Woods, inaugural address, University of Alabama, April 12, 1831 as reported in *Spirit of the Age*, April 16, 1831, 62.

6. William Switzler, *History of Boone County, Missouri*, reprint 1970, from University of Missouri Archives, 283.

7. Robert G. Wilson, inaugural address, Ohio University, August 11, 1824, 17; A. O. Hansen, *Liberalism and American Education in the Eighteenth Century* (New York: Macmillan, 1926), v.; D. W. Robson, "College Founding in the New Republic," *History of Education Quarterly* 23 (Fall 1983), 324-325.

8. William C. Anderson, inaugural address, Miami University, August 8, 1850, 61, 63.

9. Robert H. Bishop, inaugural address, Miami University, March 30, 1834, 19.

10. Alva Woods inaugural, 63.

11. James Shannon, inaugural address, University of Missouri, July 4, 1850, 27, 24.

12. John L. Lathrop, inaugural address, University of Wisconsin, July 16, 1850, 16.

13. George Junkin, inaugural address, Miami University, August 11, 1841, 48.

14. James Shannon inaugural, 28.

15. Robert H. Bishop inaugural, 18.

16. Worthington Smith, inaugural address, University of Vermont, July 31, 1849, 18-23.

17. Andrew Wylie, inaugural address, Indiana University, October 29, 1829, 35.

18. John W. Hall, inaugural address, Miami University, June 20, 1855, 35, 47.

19. John L. Lathrop, Wisconsin inaugural, 27.

20. James Shannon inaugural, 21.

21. Robert G. Wilson inaugural, 13-17.

22. Erasmus D. MacMaster, inaugural address, Miami University, August 13, 1845, 39.

23. Calvin Pease, inaugural address, University of Vermont, August 5, 1856, 50.

24. John L. Lathrop, Wisconsin inaugural, 38.

25. John W. Hall, inaugural, 39, 48-51.

26. William C. Anderson inaugural, 63-64.

27. Benjamin B. Minor, Inaugural address, University of Missouri, October 2, 1860, 25.

28. James Shannon inaugural, 29, 13.

29. George Junkin, inaugural, 48.

30. Erasmus D. MacMaster inaugural, 52.

31. G. P. Schmidt, *The Old Time College President* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1930), 205.

32. W. Smith, *Professors and Public Ethics: Studies of Moral Philosophers before the Civil War* (Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 1956), 18-21, 195.

33. R. Hostadter and C. D. Hardy, *The Development and Scope of Higher Education in the United States* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1952), 3.

34. Basil Manly, inaugural address, University of Alabama (no date on archival copy but would have been in 1837), 2-3.

35. Erasmus D. MacMaster inaugural, 40-56; R.S. Mason, Inaugural address, Newark College (University of Delaware), April 26, 1836, 14.

36. Benjamin B. Minor inaugural, 22, 24.

37. Evan Pugh, inaugural address, Farmers High School (Pennsylvania State University), Fall 1860, 22-23.

38. Joseph R. Williams, inaugural address, Michigan State Agricultural College (Michigan State University), May 13, 1857, 300-305.

39. Ibid, 307, 309, 314-315.

40. Calvin Pease inaugural, 9.

41. Schmidt, *Old Time College President*, 184.

42. E. M. Coulter, *College Life in the Old South* (Athens, GA: University of Georgia Press, 1928), 214.

43. Benjamin B. Minor inaugural, 21.

44. John L. Lathrop, inaugural address, Indiana University, July 11, 1860, 191.

45. John L. Lathrop, Wisconsin inaugural, 39.

46. Ibid, 30; Robert H. Bishop inaugural, 25.

47. Joseph R. Williams inaugural, 303.

48. Benjamin B. Minor inaugural, 24.

49. E. L. Johnson, "The 'Other Jeffersons' and the State University Idea," *Journal of Higher Education* 58 (March/April 1987), 127-150.

50. E. D. Eddy, Jr., *Colleges for our Land and Time: The Land-Grant Idea in American Education* (New York, Harper, 1956), 21-22.

51. Merle Borrowman, "The False Dawn of the State University," *History of Education Quarterly* 1 (June 1961), 6-21.

52. Hofstader and Hardy, *Development and Scope of Higher Education*, 24.

53. H. Mann, *Dedication of Antioch College and Inaugural Address of Its President* (Yellow Springs, Ohio: A.S. Dean; and Boston, Mass.: Crosby & Nichols, 1854).